

CENTRE PUNCH

Vol. 1, No. 18

Issued by the Winnipeg Railroad Employees

25

JUNE 20, 1944

Boilermaker's President Attacks Local 126

Yesterday nearly all union boilermakers received a mimeographed letter from President Chas. J. McGowan in Kansas City. The letter was in answer to a petition from some 231 boilermakers and helpers that the "governing board" in Local 126 be removed and the union be allowed to function democratically as a trade union should. To put it briefly the contents of President McGowan's letter was a surprise packet. It contained so many untrue charges against local members, so many statements having not the slightest foundation in fact and offering no hope for an early open investigation by himself or a responsible representative from Kansas City.

The press is waiting and we cannot cover the whole letter properly in this issue but to put it briefly: President McGowan accused a minority group of the local "organized and schooled by outside influences" of using unethical methods in removing the former President of the Local (Angus MacKay) from office, while he, Angus MacKay, was helpless in a hospital after a trial committee of the Local had rendered a verdict of "not guilty" on charges laid against the said Angus MacKay by a local delegate returned from the Convention at Kansas City.

The answer in brief:

1. The reference to "organized minority," "outside influences," etc., is just the usual "red herring" baloney that drips in streams from various labor leaders whenever the rank and file show signs of asserting their rights for a change when opposed to the "organized minority" that controls the whole union.

And where does he get the "minority" stuff? MacKay was removed from office by a vote of 73 to 4 approximately, when for years past the local has functioned with an average meeting attendance of 12-20!

2. MacKay refused to leave the chair and demanded charges be laid in writing. This was done and a trial committee selected. The verdict of the trial committee was guilty of the charges laid! But not guilty of infringements, technically speaking, of the Constitution. In laying the charges the delegate, W. A. Patterson, made it plain he was not charging violations of the Constitution but was charging MacKay with certain acts that warranted his immediate removal from office. So we hope that clears that up for Bro. McGowan. This was substantiated by the Lodge vote.

3. President McGowan says such methods "smack more of the blood baths of Russia and Germany than they do of true democracy..."

Well, Bro. McGowan, it's too bad if they do for they are the identical methods demanded by our Constitution and you, Bro. McGowan, know it as well as we do. If they aren't why don't you lay charges for violation of the Constitution against the member who laid the charges against your protege?

4. President McGowan states the function of the "governing board" is to "protect the membership of the Lodge and preserve its assets." Brother what this Lodge needs badly is protection from the "governing board!"

5. The letter also contains an attack on the "anonymous sheet called The Centre Punch" and charges this paper with "many cheap, illiterate and garbled statements misrepresenting the facts and not predicated upon truthful information." The answer is short—prove one misstatement of this paper! Any statement made that is not absolutely correct we will apologize for publicly!

6. Brothers, this calls for a mass meeting of the members as soon as possible. It's up to you who were elected on the committee!

THE SECOND FRONT AND THE TRADE UNIONS

The opening of the second front in France is the beginning of the end of Nazi terror. This certainly does not mean that the war is over, but it does mean that we have landed a very telling blow in the fascist midriff. It is now that he must be hit with everything we have—every bullet, bomb or shell that destroys Nazi fortifications will save the lives of our boys or our friends on the battlefields.

This brings us to the question of our duty at home. It is very obvious that the production of the weapons of war is in our hands. We must not let our boys down in the armed forces at this time, just because some flag-waving profiteer is making a big rake-off upon our labor.

We all know that in industry there is more blundering than at any time and still profits keep progressively advancing, and at our expense. What, then, must the policy of the trade unions be? We do not wish to strike at this time.

This our leaders have told to our government and the industrial magnets of our country. This gentry is taking an unfair advantage of this very fact—we do not want to strike.

The trade unions should strive at this time to place the responsibility of the discontent that exists, among the working people—where it rightly belongs, with the leaders of industry and their "Yes-men" at Ottawa.

The trade union leader who fails to understand the need for a progressive, democratic trade union should be watched very closely by the members he is supposed to lead. The trade unionist who does not keep his eye upon the action of his leaders will invite disaster to himself and to the boy now fighting to preserve the world for democracy.

The future of the working people depends, not upon the promises of any man, but upon the strength of their trade unions to enforce social justice.

The Wise Five

There once were five grey monkeys a-meetin' in the trees,
Who ruminated sadly as they scratched each other's fleas.
Their brows were corrugated and wrinkled up with pain
With the agony of thinking without a single brain.

They all had little mirrors and were proud of what they saw,
So they scratched another flea bite and they passed another law.

Of course it's just a fable of some monkeys and their ways.
But God help the other unions if they turn them loose these days!

—By R. U. Knutz.

SASKATCHEWAN ELECTIONS

This election was one of the most smashing victories that the progressive forces of Canada have ever established. In the centre of a farm population and an old-line party stronghold!

However, an analysis of the the campaign and its result leads us to the conclusion that the vote means this—a vote for reforms promised by all parties but entrusted by the people to the C.C.F. It is a good step in the right direction but we don't believe it is correct to interpret the vote as a

particularly strong "Socialist" declaration.

The policy of not stressing Socialism during the campaign is O.K. with us for we realize that many C.C.F. supporters would not support Socialism. However, the election produces a real problem which we hope the C.C.F. leaders solve successfully—the gradual control of Canadian industry without going Socialist.

By the way, brothers, these results may mean an extra 7-8 cents on our wage report. I wonder?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor.

Dear sir,—After the last issue of The Centre Punch I noticed the collector didn't get very far with the dues dodging, no-bills in our midst. How any man has the gall to sit on the fence and let the other fellow fight for him is beyond me.

Our organization isn't perfect, we know, but at least we who belong are trying to improve things, even though it doesn't appear as if we are accomplishing very much.

To my mind, every man who doesn't belong is a potential threat, and who knows what is going to happen in the future. If we had any guts we'd refuse to work with any man who didn't carry a card; make things so miserable for them they'd either live up or get out, preferably the latter.

—Card Mau.

(Ed. note—The foregoing letter we believe to be the honest belief of an active trade unionist. He may be perfectly correct. However, we must in fairness point out that in Canadian railroad shops a paradoxical situation often exists. That is that progressive, labor-conscious policies often get more support from non-union men than from the card carriers.

In plain words we believe that the solution for a 100 percent membership lies with the union. Let us produce and support aggressive, non-collaborationist policies and we believe it would be surprising the small number of "no-bills" left. One real threat to labor today in our opinion is the "no-bill" who carries a card only to hold preference on his job—for no other reason!)

To the Editor.

Sir,—There are a lot of rumors on wage increases, etc., but no one knows anything about them. Yet, at the same time, we are paying 25 percent into the district, as I understand, to have representation on these conditions. The question is, are we entitled to know? If not, why are they going there at our expense? Also, Mr. Editor, you may be able to supply the information of why we didn't get an increase in wages when the brothers across the line got theirs. How is it there was so much secrecy about it?

Again, Mr. Editor, we would greatly appreciate any informa-

tion on why Transcona Shops are setting up a number of helpers and five done so since 1941, yet in the Ft. Rouge Shops they have not set up any in the Boilermakers—yet in every other craft. We would appreciate any information as lots of the helpers there have from 20 to 30 years' experience, and had been set up as Boilermakers in 1928 during the emergency, and according to information did as good as the majority of the Boilermakers then and now. Trusting you will give us any information you or any of the brothers may have.

I remain,

A HOLDER ON.

CANADIAN PAL (ANDY McNAUGHTON)

To the Editor.

Dear sir,—Andy McNaughton was our man, one we would have fought for like a wild dog, all of us Canadians overseas.

We thought he was the man to lead us as he was for us all the way. But no, the Imperial policies prevailed and the Canadian Army was split. This was one thing we did not want to happen as we could do a lot better as a Canadian Army of fighting men and we knew it and felt it.

We boys who went overseas together got to be able to see our pals' weak points and knew how to take the jolt and smile together, but when they split us up the morale of the boys seemed to go to hell (where we figured on sending the Hun).

But anyway we'll rise above our troubles and come out on top for we have to show a man we thought a lot of that we don't forget what he did for us Canadians. He did his job and we Canadians would have followed him anywhere he might have led us—"Our Andy."

—An Old "Pat."

FT. ROUGE SHOPS

To the Editor.

Sir,—Here we are again, after another three weeks of silence by the "Governing Board."

In regards to any extra time a man may want to visit his family or to go anywhere to recuperate after a year on the grindstone, looks like he's going to be S.O.L. as the expression of the railroad goes. And no doubt a "Governing Board" loves this as their secret.

However, the boys in the Ft. Rouge Shops were put into great despair last week, as the chairman

of the "Governing Board" got putting his finger in a hole he had drilled, and of course saw blood. However, the boys after hearing of it, naturally guessed it was a case of another trip to Kansas City and were wondering whether he was going to be president. But of course, being on days he went to see the Lady in White who fixed him up and of course the boys were very glad to see him return to work, and wish... however the next day the bandage was off and the solitary confinement of the "Board" is proceeding at its usual practice of "what shall we do and where shall we go from here."

There is the story of five men who sent in two resolutions for the compensation. What they are the members don't know. But of course it's only the "Governing Board's," not the membership.

Phew!

"BOOMER."

HANDS ACROSS THE BORDER

In relation to the struggle within the Boilermaker's Local 126 to re-establish some sort of bona-fide union apparatus instead of the dictatorship so ably (?) represented by the phoney "governing board" we are quoting extracts from a letter from an active member of one of the biggest locals across the line:

"... I certainly like that little green paper (Centre Punch) ... He promised that he would help me take up a little donation for The Centre Punch one of these days ... how should this be sent and to what address? So you have run afoul of the 'great' International. The high-handedness just goes on and on. ... I like the stubborn, united fight you boys are putting up ... against the International and its puppet governors, and you are bound to win as soon as your story is broadcast and honestly understood."

The letter closes with a request for more Centre Punches. It is pertinent here to point out that the writer has touched the core of our problem in the last sentence. Publicity and a clean-up can do wonders within the International, far more than 20 petitions.

(Ed. note—For the benefit of the brother who wrote the letter we are pointing out that he is only known to the one who received it.)

Manitoba Prospective Pension Society

121 George St.,
Winnipeg, Man.

ECLLE.. 5.9.

*"The profit of the earth is for all,
The King himself liveth off the field."*

To the Members of the Legislature Assembly.

Dear Sirs:

May I ask that serious consideration be given at the present session of this Provincial Legislature to the following request:

The objects of which Association are—

1. To protect the rights and interests of the prospective old age pensioners.
2. To prevent discrimination in the granting of pensions.
3. To work for a procedure avoiding technicalities and undue delay in the consideration of pension applications.
4. To endeavor to secure and maintain fair and just legislation, and executive action at all times in the interest of prospective pensioners.
5. To preserve to the pensioner his or her full status as a citizen entitled to a pension as a social and legal right, and not by way of relief, or charity, or as a debt.
6. To enable pensioners to maintain their dignity and self respect as citizens of Canada.
7. To reduce the age of pensioners from 70 years to 60 years.
8. To increase the amount of pension from \$20 to \$50 per month.
9. To have the residence qualification of twenty years apply to applicants who have resided in any province or territory in Canada, and to have Canadian citizenship and residence anywhere in Canada the basis for pension qualifications.
10. To amend the present legislation to provide that where the pensioner has been domiciled in Canada for twenty years a temporary absence in a foreign country where domicile was, not lost, shall not count against the applicants pension.
11. Owing to the impossibility of reaching certain sections of Europe for birth certificates, that the provision requiring production of birth certificates shall be dispensed with.
12. All the provisions herein relating to prospective pensions shall equally apply to all blind persons in receipt of pensions.

NEWS BRIEFS

By The Gleaner

TORY WOLVES REBUFFED

Toronto, Ont.—Labor leaders last week told B. A. Trestrail where to get off at when he invited the Toronto District Labor Council (AFL) to send representatives to a meeting of the "Society for Individual Freedom (Opposing State Socialism)" on May 26 at the King Edward Hotel.

The Council refused the invitation in no uncertain terms. J. W. Buckley, secretary of the Council and vice-president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, denounced the Trestrail Society as an anti-labor "instrument of the Tory machine."

Remember, we warned you about this outfit?

TEARS FOR DIES

(Comments on the announcement by chief U.S. red-baiter Martin Dies that he will not stand for re-election to Congress in the next election.)

LABOR . . .

This is the greatest single contribution Congressman Dies has made to the welfare of this country. — C.I.O. President Philip Murray.

FARMER . . .

The air smells sweeter already. — James G. Patton, president of U.S. National Farmers Union.

We have our Dies in Canada,

too. In fact, many from internment. They were fascists once; wonder what they are now?

IT IS THE SPIRIT!

The best is not got from men by use of a whip: it comes only from moral conviction. — J. Bowman, vice-president of the Mine-workers' Federation of Great Britain.

Supervisors, please note!

THE SOONER, THE BETTER

The British and American governments have at long last been forced to follow that policy in the case of Tito, de Gaulle, the anti-fascist parties in Italy. And no doubt London and Washington will some day be forced to back the anti-fascists in Greece, to quit backing the Polish "government-in-exile," to tell Chiang Kai-shek that he can't go on fighting the Japs and the Chinese Communists at the same time. But why wait to be forced? Why waste months and years fooling around with helpless reactionaries and giving the cold shoulder to left-wing movement that are literally dying to win the war?—Steelworker and Miner, Sydney, N.S.

Wonder if there is an unemployment scheme for some of these ing's. They'll need it, I'm thinking.

THE LONE WOLF RETURNS

My friends,—

A long time no write for the Centre Punch; guess I'm getting in the vice-president's class. Once upon a time we could see how they earned their pay by their reports in the Journal. But the paper shortage and four pages of ads covers that alright.

Well, as you know, the "Boiler-maker's Bible" came around a week or so ago. Green this time and with an Irish twist—sez one thing and means another. Be sure and read it, but don't get a case of "constitutionalitis"—it's often fatal. I noticed in the preamble "with the assistance of intelligent combinations," right in black and white! Now take a look at our "intelligent combination" of "Governors" and sneeze slightly!

Maybe Singing Sam remembers when he said: "We've tried everything to get members to attend meetings, even a raffle or something." Well, your chances at odds of "5 to 0" ought to be pretty good now, or do you take along mirrors and argue with yourself? As for Aberdeen Angus, a man don't walk into a hall and intimate in words

"they're out to get me" or something similar if he's free and above board. Well, it would seem to be a habit this walking out such as a certain performance at the Legion curling match.

What we have to have now is team play by all for all. Now I hope you send a Centre Punch to the Latin Quarter at Kansas City to the brother who grouped the membership into classes.

The classes are divided as follows, as we see it from reading his article:

- (1) The lodge officials.
- (2) Anyone who doesn't always agree with the officials.
- (3) Those who don't attend.

His rating for these groups approximate 100 percent for "loyal" officials; minus 100 percent for group two, and none for group three.

Of course his article is concerned for the future of group three from the nefarious influences of group two. So he signs his article "Caveat Emptor" (Let the buyers beware). Well I'll sign my article

"NE VENDRE PAS"

(Nothing to Sell)

A Message To Trade Unionists

Since the outbreak of war, there has been in most centres in Canada a tremendous influx of young people into the industrial life of the country.

These young folks, most of them just out of school, have presented a serious problem to the trade unions. Not having worked before, they know nothing of working conditions, nor of the essentials of trade unionism, and being young people they need more than meetings to make them union conscious. They must have recreation, social life and education which would help bridge the wide gap between school life and life in the outer world. These things trade unions should attempt to provide.

The Labor Youth Federation, a national labor youth organization, without political affiliation and composed of people of numerous nationalities and religious beliefs, is an agency which could assist the trade unions in this city in their youth work. In this field the "L.Y.F." nationally has lead all other youth groups in Canada. In Ontario the "L.Y.F." organized a delegation of young people to present a brief to Premier Drew dealing with physical fitness, child labor, minimum wages and educa-

tion. This delegation included members of the International Association of Machinists, United Electrical and Machine Workers, United Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers and numerous others.

In Manitoba L.Y.F. actively has centered mainly around war service work, recreation and socials and a considerable of education. The organization also took an active part in the youth conference which was held in this city several weeks ago. It was this conference which crystallized future L.Y.F. activity. For it was found that one of the detriments in the conference was the lack of young trade union participation and the L.Y.F. as a labor youth organization felt this to be a direct challenge to it. The challenge has been accepted. The importance of trade union participation in planning a youth program for post-war cannot be stressed enough.

The Winnipeg L.Y.F. is offering its assistance to the trade unions of this city in promoting active participation in the trade unions and civic life by young people in industry through the introduction of educational and recreational programs into the local trade union movement. The L.Y.F. says, Trade union youth must be heard. What do you say?

Dept. of Labor

Ottawa,

June 9, 1944.

Dear Sir:

Would you be good enough to send us a sample copy of The Centre Punch, as we are interested in your paper.

Yours truly,

Ethel B. Merifield,
Librarian.

Mr. W. A. Patterson,
Ste. 4-D, Fort Garry Crt.,
Winnipeg.

PERTINENT FACTS

Our government, up to the end of the last fiscal year, has paid out in subsidies the sum of \$115,500,000. A lot of dough. This is to keep the cost of living down, thus preventing inflation.

Just how much difference is there between paying it to the government in taxes so that they in turn can pay the manufacturer and thus keep their profits up, and us paying it to the corner grocer and let him do the paying over. I'd like to know.

I see the chartered banks are still stalling when it comes to making public the amount of cash they hold in reserve. It's funny, the government can force us to reveal everything about ourselves, all the intimate details of our lives, our incomes and our work, but money, oh no! Must be nice to be rich.

TO OUR READERS

The Centre Punch was held over a week as we were informed that the report of the N.W.L.B. on our wage question would be handed down by the 20th. At this writing there is no sign of it, but we may get a last minute note in.

PANORAMA OF ITALY

If I were an artist, with nothing to do,
I'd paint a picture, a composite view
Of historic Italy, in which I would show
Visions of contrasts; the high and the low.

Filthy brats yelling "Caramella" at me,
There'd be towering mountains, a deep blue sea,
High plumed horses and colorful carts,
Two-toned tresses on hustling tarts.

I'd show Napoleonic cops, the Carabinieri,
Defected old women with too much to carry,
Dignified gentlemen with Balboa beards,
Bare bottomed bambinos with both ends smeared.

Castles and palaces, opera houses too,
Hotel on a mountain, marvellous view,
Homes made of wood, briquettes and mud,
People covered with scabs, scurvey and blood.

Churches and chapels, great to behold,
Each a king's ransom in glittering gold,
Poverty and want, man craving for food,
Picking through garbage, practically nude.

Stately cathedrals with high toned bells,
Rico vero shelters with horrible smells,
Moulding catacombs, a place for the dead,
Noisy civilians shouting for bread.

Palatial villas, with palm trees tall,
A stinking hovel, mere hole in the wall,
Tree fringed lawns, swept by the breeze,
Goats wading in filth up to their knees.

Revealing statues, all details complete,
A sensuous lass, with sores on her feet,
Big breasted damsels, but never a bra,
Bumping against you, there should be a law.

Creeping boulevards; a spangled team,
Alleys that wind like a dope fiend's dream,
Flowers blooming on the side of a hill,
Sidewalk latrine, with privacy nil.

Two by four shops, with shelving all bare,
Gesturing merchants, arms flailing the air,
Narrow gauge sidewalks, made like a shelf,
A butt-picking youngster, scratching himself.

Lumbering carts, hogging the road,
Nondescript trucks, frequently towed,
Diminutive donkeys, loaded for bear,
Horse-drawn taxis, seeking a fare.

Home-made brooms, weeds tied to a stick,
Used in the streets to clean off the brick,
Bicycles and pushcarts, blocking the path,
Street corner politicians, needing a bath.

Arrogant wretches, picking up snipes,
Miniature flats of various types,
Young street singer, hand-organ tunes,
Shoe shine boys, sidewalk saloons.

A beauteous maiden, smile on her face,
With a breath of garlic, fouling the place,
Listless housewife, no shoes on her feet,
Washing and cooking, out on the street.

The family wash, of tattle-tale grey,
Hung on a balcony, blocking the way,
Native coffee, gosh! what a mixture,
Tiled bathroom with only one fixture.

Family dining from one common bowl,
Next to the fish store, a terrible hole,
Italian zoot-suiters, flashily dressed,
Barefooted beggars, looking oppressed.

Mud smeared children, clustering about,
Filling their jugs at the community spout,
Dutiful mother, with look of despair,
Picking the lice from her small daughter's hair.

Capable craftsmen, skilled in their art,
Decrepit old sharks, falling apart,
Intricate needlework, out on display,
Surrounded by rot, filth and decay.

Elegant caskets, carved out by hand,
Odorous factories, where leather is tanned,
A shoemaker's shop, a black market store,
Crawling with vermin, no screens on the door.

I've tried to describe the things I have seen,
Panorama of Italy, the brown and the green,
I've neglected the war scars, visible yet,
But those are the things we want to forget;
I'm glad I came, but damned anxious to go,
Give it back to the natives, I'm ready to blow!

INVASION vs. "GOVERNORS"

Does it not strike all the rank-and-file members of our various organizations what a unique situation exists in Winnipeg?

Here we have headlines announcing the opening of some of the greatest battles in history in which millions of men will eventually be sacrificed—for what? For the destruction of dictatorship and the preservation of the rights and freedoms of the majority. But do these events, world shaking in their significance and outcome, mean anything to the Boilermaker's Union officials? Apparently not—for on the eve of one of the world's bloodiest struggles to smash a dictatorship and all it stands for, we have one forced upon us in Local 126.

The five men who accepted the positions of "governors" are all over twenty-one but we are appealing to them to reconsider their position. Whatever may be their motive for acceptance, it can only add up to one thing—collaboration with dictators! Theirs is the choice but it will be a tough one to "live down." So again, brothers,—do the right thing and get out!

Pass Along Your Centre Punch

GIRLS' SOFTBALL

The following schedule for Intermediate Girls' Softball is being printed at the request of Brother Beetz, one of our active union men, who we understand manages the St. James Canucks. After July 15 schedule will come in the next issue.

STANDING

Team	P.	W.	L.	Pts.
St. James	7	7	0	14
Ashdown's	5	3	2	6
Brown Birds ..	2	2	0	4
I.P.A.C.	4	2	2	4
Border	3	1	2	2
Cardinals	4	0	4	0
St. Vital	4	0	4	0

* * *

June

- 20—I.P.A.C. vs. Brownies.
- 21—Cardinals vs. Border; Ashdown's vs. Brownies.
- 22—Canucks vs. St. Vital.
- 23—Cardinals vs. I.P.A.C.
- 26—Cardinals vs. St. Vital; Canucks vs. Brownies.
- 27—I.P.A.C. vs. Ashdown's.
- 28—Border vs. St. Vital; Cardinals vs. Brownies.
- 29—I.P.A.C. vs. St. Vital; Border vs. Cardinals.

July

- 3—Canucks vs. Cardinals.
- 4—Brownies vs. St. Vital; I.P.A.C. vs. ???
- 7—St. Vital vs. Canucks; Ashdown's vs. Border.
- 5—Ashdown's vs. Canucks.
- 6—Brownies vs. Border; I.P.A.C. vs. Cardinals.
- 10—St. Vital vs. Cardinals; Border vs. Brownies
- 11—Brownies vs. Ashdown's; I.P.A.C. vs. Canucks.
- 12—Ashdown's vs. St. Vital; Border vs. Canucks.
- 13—Brownies vs. I.P.A.C.
- 14—St. Vital vs. Border; Ashdown's vs. Cardinals.

Heavy Responsibility

Unless there is unity there is little hope of any real and vital change taking place in the interests of the working people. Those who obstruct unity bear heavy responsibilities for their actions. — Jack Tanner, president of the British Amalgamated Engineering Union.

And this applies locally, too.

CORRESPONDENCE!

W. A. PATERSON, Suite 4D Ft. Garry Court, Winnipeg.

J. BRANAN, 89 Inkster Blvd., Winnipeg.

BLACKSMITHS

Local 565 meets at the
LABOR TEMPLE
FRIDAY, JULY 7th
at 8 p.m.

NOTE—This local meets the first Friday of each month.

MACHINISTS

JUNE - JULY - AUGUST

4th Wednesday each
month — 7.30 p.m.

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